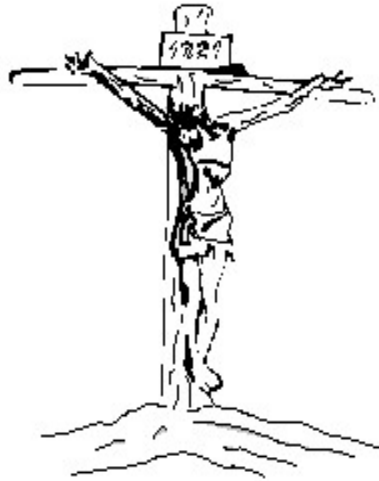


# Blood in the Scheme of Redemption



By Dallas Burdette October 5, 1997

**Thrust statement:** Redemption is through the blood of Christ.

**Scripture reading:**

For this is My **blood** of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins ([Matthew 26:28](#)).

For the life of the flesh *is* in the **blood**, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it *is* the **blood** *that* makes atonement for the soul' ([Leviticus 17:11](#)).

## COVENANT BLOOD

**"this is my **Blood** of the New Covenant."** This clause is pregnant and rich with historical background and meaning. An understanding of Old Testament sacrifices is indispensable to a proper grasp of this phrase. It is through the **blood of the covenant** that Jesus is able to accomplish for man that which he cannot accomplish for himself; namely, eternal redemption. Deliverance from condemnation is brought about through the **blood of the Son of God**. Paul sets forth the power of the blood in his epistle to the Ephesians:

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the

dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth ([Ephesians 1:7-10](#)).

Redemption includes everything God does for the sinner. In salvation two things stand out prominently in the mind of every believer; namely, the forgiveness of sins and redemption of the body from the grave. Each believer is an illustration of the **power of the blood of Christ**. It is through the **virtue of the blood** that God raised our Lord Jesus from the dead. It is through the blood of Christ that Christians are raised from the dead. The Hebrew writer forcefully anchored this truth in the hearts of the believers: "Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the **blood of the everlasting covenant**, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom [be] glory forever and ever. Amen" ([Hebrews 13:20-21](#)).

There is **power in the blood**! The blood makes us complete. The **blood enables us** to every good work. For all who believe in Jesus as God's Messiah, the **blood opens the way to heaven**, the **blood opens the grave**. In addition to these helps and benefits, the blood of Jesus destroys the power of death, the power of Satan, and the power of Hell.

The author of Hebrews artfully **captures the essence of Christ's blood** when he writes: "Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption" ([Hebrews 9:12](#)). **His blood is the answer** to man's redemption. The Holy Spirit, through this same writer, also gives a prominent place to the blood:

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn [who] [are] registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the **blood of sprinkling** that speaks better things than [that] [of] Abel ([Hebrews 12: 22-24](#)).

It is the blood of Jesus that keeps heaven open for sinners and sends the spiritual blessings from heaven upon sinful man. The throne of grace owes its existence to the precious **blood of the Lamb of God**. Christians must never forget that **redemption is through the blood of God's Anointed One**. Peter expresses it this way: "...knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, [like] silver or gold, from your aimless conduct [received] by tradition from your fathers, but with the **precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" ([1 Peter 1:18-19](#)).

As long as heaven lasts, the praises of the blood will sound forth from heaven itself. John writes: "And they sang a new song, saying: 'You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have **redeemed us to God by Your blood** out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation'" ([Revelation 5:9](#)).

Forgiveness is the subject of heaven. Forgiveness is the subject of earth. Forgiveness is the subject of the church. Forgiveness is the subject of both the Old and New Testament writings. Forgiveness is not just a new covenant concept. The Old Testament scriptures also abound with illustrations setting forth the utter destruction of sin, God's forgiveness, and rejoicing. The blood of Jesus flowed, as it were, backwards and forwards in man's redemption. Forgiveness is something to sing about in heaven and on earth. God reminds Israel of His forgiveness:

I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, And like a cloud, your sins. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you." **Sing** O heavens, for the Lord has done [it]! **Shout**, you lower parts of the earth; Break **forth** into singing, you mountains, O forest, and every tree in it! (Isaiah 44:22).

Isaiah apply remarks:

For You have cast all my sins behind Your back (38:17).

In the words of Micah:

He will again have compassion on us, And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea (7:19).

God tells Jeremiah:

'I will cleanse them from all their iniquity by which they have sinned against Me, and I will pardon all their iniquities by which they have sinned and by which they have transgressed against Me (33:8).

Again, God reveals to Jeremiah the coming of a new covenant in which sin would be done away with once and for all:

Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah-- "not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day [that] I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the Lord. "But this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. "No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more" (31:31-34).

This forgiveness of sins is what Paul details in the book of Romans. Jeremiah tells the "fact," but Paul details the "how." As Paul writes about this matchless love, this unfathomable mercy, this perfect holiness of God, one must stand in awe. In **Romans 3: 23-26**, Paul burst forth with rapturous language in describing the method God employs to justify man and yet at the same time exonerate His holiness in His actions.

...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely (**δωρεᾶν**, **dwreaVn**) by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth [as] a **propitiation by His blood**, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. (3:23-26).

This word "freely" is also translated "without a cause" in [John 15:25](#): "But [this] [happened] that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause' (δωρεαΨν). Since God is holy, God has to deal with sin in a way that His holiness is not questioned. God's righteous wrath against sin is an outward manifestation of His holiness. God cannot allow rebellion to go unpunished. Justice demands retribution. Thus, God devises a way to demonstrate His holiness, and yet at the same time justify sinful man. God's solution is "propitiation (ιΣλαστηψριον, **Jilasthvrion**) by His blood, through faith."

In the Hebrew Old Testament, the **Jilasthvrion** is called tr\^P)K^ (k^pp)r#, "mercy seat," "throne of mercy," "atonement"). This word refers to the mercy seat that was on the ark of the testimony where the **blood of the sacrifices** was sprinkled on the Day of [Atonement \(Numbers 7:89\)](#). Also, the author of Hebrews speaks of the covering on the Ark of the Covenant as a "mercy Seat." He writes:

. . . and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which [were] the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat (ιΣλαστηψριον). Of these things we cannot now speak in detail ([9:3-5](#)).

Jesus, in the words of Paul, is God's mercy seat (ιΣλαστηψριον) [[Romans 3:25](#)] for sinful man. In other words, Christ is the site at which atonement takes place. In the Old Testament the atonement was looked upon by God alone, but in the New Testament the atonement is open for all to see, for the entire universe. John also speaks of Jesus as a propitiation: ". . . and He Himself is the propitiation (ιΣλασμοψ, Jilasmov") for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world. The propitiation is God's mercy-seat, that is to say, God's throne of mercy ([1 John 2:2](#)).

This emancipation from God's righteous wrath, this freedom from the dominion of sin, this deliverance from the curse of law, and this redemption from condemnation is so complete and so perfect that the sinner is looked upon as absolutely justified and righteous before God. Since Jesus is our "wisdom from God--and righteousness and sanctification and redemption," then, let him "who glories . . . glory in the Lord," writes Paul ([1 Corinthians 1:30-31](#)). The law is now fulfilled in us since we are in Christ ([Romans 8:3-5](#)).

It is to this view of complete forgiveness of sins that the penman of Hebrews writes that there is nothing to prevent man approaching the throne of grace with the greatest of freedom; he says, "Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need ([Hebrews 4:16](#))." How is this access accomplished? Again, the same author tells us that it is **through the blood**. He senses the glory of the **blood of Christ** when he writes:

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the **blood of Jesus**, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and [having] a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water ([Hebrews 10:19-20](#)).

Our right to **draw near** is affirmed by the blood of Jesus; He is our High Priest. Since we are now priests of God **redeemed by the blood**, the Holy Spirit encourages believers to approach God's throne. Even John, when Jesus rolls back the curtain of heaven, declares with transported joy: "To Him who

loved us and **washed us from our sins in His own blood**, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him [be] glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen" (**Revelation 1:5b-6**). Because we are redeemed priests, God exhorts believers to draw near.

### **Worship: Draw Near**

What does it mean to draw near? To **draw near** is an act of worship. Worship in the New Testament is never identified with a so-called Sunday morning "worship service." Under the New Covenant there are no **prescribed outward rituals** for divine worship, such as **five acts** to be performed in a fixed order or enacted in a certain manner, nor a "set hour" for a worship service. Yes, it is true that Christians are to come together, but for what purpose? The purpose of believers coming together is never described as worship. But rather to strengthen and encourage one another in the faith lest some depart from the faith. The act of worship in the New Testament is in presenting your bodies a living sacrifice, which is your spiritual act of worship. In other words, the Father declares that we are to present our bodies as living sacrifices, which is our spiritual act of worship (**Romans 12:1-3**). Whatever we do to His glory and honor becomes our spiritual offering. In this way all our actions become "thank offerings" to God. Our life is to be one of complete consecration to God.

This phrase, "let us draw near," conveys the idea of sacrifice. The word "enter" is a priestly word, at least in this context. Christians, as priests, approach the throne of God's grace **through the blood of Christ**. Since Christ Himself **entered the holy place through His own blood**, Christians are encouraged to come before the throne of grace. Once more, the writer of Hebrews explains the **significance and efficacy of the blood of Christ**:

Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with **His own blood** He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, **how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself** without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (**9:12-14**).

Praise God for the **blood**! It is **the blood of Christ that possesses the power to cleanse** us and to make us fit to serve the living God. In some manner, this offering up of Jesus as sacrifice is done through the eternal Spirit who was in Jesus Christ when he shed His blood. It appears that the Holy Spirit lived and worked in that blood so that when it was shed it would not be a dead blood, but rather a living blood that could ascend, as it were, to heaven to exercise its divine power from there. How? I don't know. The word of God states it; therefore, I accept it.

### **Spiritual Offering of the Christian**

In one's relationship to God as priest, there are no offerings that a Christian can bring other than a belief in honoring the blood of the Lamb of God in one's daily walk with Him and his fellow man. Every act that a Christian performs in response to Jesus as Lord is an act of worship that honors the blood of Christ. In the Old Testament, it was the duty of priests to offer up sacrifices or to attend to everything that was essential for ministry in the house of God, but in the New Testament, every Christian is to offer his life as a living sacrifice, which is his act of worship.

For the Believer, his or her service is not in rituals performed Sunday morning in a so-called worship service. In fact, the New Testament never speaks of a worship service for the believer. In the Messianic

age, there are no outward or external arrangements for divine worship. Worship does not start at 9 am and stop at 10 am, but rather it is one's way of life -- twenty-four hours a day. In Christianity, worship is in presenting one's body a living sacrifice, which is one's spiritual act of worship. As Leon Morris has made clear:

To see Christ as having offered the perfect sacrifice that brings us salvation is not to enter a realm of cheap grace. It does not mean that we offer no sacrifice. It means that our sacrifice is of a different order. It is not atoning, but a costly response to a sacrifice that is atoning....Paul speaks of himself as being made a sacrifice in the service of other Christians (Phil. 2:17) and he refers to the gifts the Philippians Christians sent him as 'a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God' (Phil. 4:18). The writer to the Hebrews refers to 'a sacrifice of praise -- the fruit of lips that confess his name and he speaks of doing good and sharing with other as sacrifices with which God is well pleased (Heb. 13:15-16).

When one presents his or her body a living sacrifice, that involves a vertical as well as a horizontal relationship -- to God and man. God's grace teaches children of God to deny ungodliness and worldly lust and to live lives worthy of the One who redeemed them by His blood. One must never forget that "life is in the blood." To set the tone for a deeper meaning of the Lord's words about the "blood of the new covenant," one must reflect on the history behind this phrase.

### Life in the Blood

"Life of the flesh is in the blood." What does that mean? Moses told the Israelites that "the life of the flesh [is] in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it [is] the blood [that] makes atonement for the soul." Without blood there can be no life for man. Without the blood of Jesus there can be no eternal life for man; Jesus confirms the validity of Leviticus when He cries out:

I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world." The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this [Man] give us [His] flesh to eat?" Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you" (John 6:51-53).

This context appears to teach that faith is the means whereby one appropriates the flesh and blood of the Son of God. It is through faith that one lays claim to God's appointed sacrifice; namely, God's crucified One. Jesus is the source of life for the believer. Without His death and blood there could be no life. The Hebrew writers expressly states this teaching:

How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. . . without shedding of blood there is no remission (9:14-15b).



**The shedding of blood in the Old Testament** looked forward to the coming of the final sacrifice, the sacrifice of Jesus. Again, the Hebrew writer says, "But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God" (10:12). The Old Testament foreshadowed the coming One's sacrifice for the salvation of man. For instance, the Scriptures declare: "For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, [and] not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect" (Hebrews 10:1).

The real versus the shadow is clearly presented by the Holy Spirit. An understanding of this concept will assist one in his or her apprehension of the "real thing;" namely, Jesus. An awareness of the Old Testament shadows is indispensable to a proper sensitivity of redemption by the blood of Christ in the New Testament. R. L. Kilpatrick, editor of Ensign, paints an excellent portrait in presenting the redemptive drama set forth on the stage of the Old Testament in types and shadows. He says,

The OT is the stage upon which the redemptive drama is 'pre-formed.' It is essential that the Christian system be seen against this kind of background. The greatest lesson in the OT on the true meaning of Gospel is seen in the Exodus. In fact, the Exodus is the very heart of the OT. "Exodus dominates the skyline of the OT history. It towers over the consciousness of Israel for all time to come. All future history is understood in light of that event. The deliverance becomes the pattern for all future deliverances."

Again, he writes about a visible screen on which to portray spiritual images:

Just as Israel had her signs and seals that provided the framework for 'remembering' their redemption from Egyptian slavery, namely the Feast Days with all their trimmings -- regulated by the ordinance. In the Christian age it is still essential that we have a visible 'screen' on which to portray spiritual images....When we sit down to eat we realize that he is our true 'bread of life' and our 'living water'. . ."

As Kilpatrick points out, our visible screen is in the eating of bread and drinking of wine in the Lord's supper. Every time believers eat the bread and drink the wine, they are reminded of their redemption through the poured out blood of Jesus. Paul writes: "For as often as you **eat this bread and drink this cup**, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes" (I Corinthians 11:26). Matthew also summarizes that eventful night in which our Lord broke bread with His disciples. He captures this spiritual image when he writes:

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke [it], and gave [it] to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave [it] to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. "For this is **My blood** of the new covenant, **which is shed** for many for the remission of sins (Matthew 26:26-28).

In this Last Supper, one witnesses the drama set forth on the screen of the Old Testament. During this meal, Jesus acknowledges His death by referring to **His blood being shed** (εξέχυνον, ekcunomenon, "poured out"). Also, Jesus interprets this act with the **forgiveness of sins** (εἰς ἀφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, ei' afesin jJamartiwn), a phrase which neither Luke nor Mark has.

This **pouring out** is reminiscent of the "sin offering" ritual in Leviticus (chapter 16). Five times in the

fourth chapter of Leviticus, Moses repeats the same instruction: "And the priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the Lord, which is in the tabernacle of meeting; and he **shall pour the remaining blood** of the bull at the base of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of meeting" ([Leviticus 4:7, 18, 25, 30, 34](#)).

## **Egypt -- Blood – Passover**

Forgiveness and redemption are always associated with **blood**. To illustrate this truth about blood, one needs to reflect on the event that spared the firstborn among the Israelites but destroyed the firstborn among the Egyptians. Moses details the instruction about blood for the preservation of the firstborn among the Israelites. Prior to the Exodus, God sent ten plagues upon the Egyptians for their refusal to allow the Israelites to leave. The tenth plague is the plague in which the children of Israel were instructed to kill a lamb and place the **blood** upon the two doorposts and upon the lintel. God said, "And they shall take [some] of the **blood** and put [it] on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it ([Exodus 12:7](#))."

Thus, when the angel of God passed throughout the land of Egypt, the houses with the token of blood would be spared. The destroying angel would pass over the blood-smeared houses. The blood is what saved them. God instructed Moses to say: "Now **the blood shall be a sign** for you on the houses where you [are]. And **when I see the blood**, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy [you] when I strike the land of Egypt" ([Exodus 12:13](#)).

## **Firstborn in Egypt and Goshen**

That sign or token was to be the blood of the lamb. Those that did not have this token upon their doorposts and lintel would suffer the loss of "the firstborn." The houses that were covered with the lamb's blood were spared this loss. This redemption was not simply brought about through the exercise of God's power, but in accord with the righteous character of God. Some firstborn were destroyed, while others were spared. What determined their condemnation or redemption? The **absence of the blood** brought death, but the **presence of the blood** brought life.

## **Firstborn in Heaven**

No wonder the Hebrew writer speaks of the Christian community as the ekklesia of the "firstborn ones" ([12:23](#)). The firstborn of the Israelites were **redeemed with the blood of the Passover lamb**; the firstborn ones of Christ are **redeemed with the blood of the Lamb of God**. The **blood of Jesus** is that which redeems. Is it any wonder that John records the praises offered by the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders as appropriate to express the greatness of what God accomplishes for believers through the **shed blood of Christ**. "When I see the **blood** I will pass over you" is as true now as it was when God spoke these words to Moses. Do you see a parallel between the then and the now with the **blood**?

With the **blood of God's Lamb**, Jesus the Messiah, God covers the "firstborn ones," He passes over their sins just as he passed over the sins of the firstborn ones in Goshen. Through the **blood** there is life, not death; on the other hand, for those not covered by the **blood**, judgment thunders loud and clear. For those covered by the **blood of the Lamb**, they are justified, sanctified, washed, and redeemed. Earth and heaven ring out praise for such grace, for such mercy, for such love. These wonders not only fill the earth, but also the heavenly realm.



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**PREACHED:**

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